

Computer Literacy Statistics – 2014 (Annual)

Department of Census and Statistics

Sri Lanka

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The birth of the Information Age which is also known as Computer Age, is associated with the Digital Revolution, just as the Industrial Revolution marked the birth of the Industrial Age. The Digital and Information and Communication Technology (ICT) revolutions are twin revolutions. The rapid developments in ICT have greatly contributed in enhancing human living standards worldwide. The advanced capability of this technology facilitates with extremely efficient collaboration and access to correct, consistent and effective information, which is fundamental to manage the quality in total. In developed world, most of the key economically effective environments are increasingly ICT dominant and therefore, investing on ICT developments in the 21st century has become a compulsory requirement for a country to survive.

Timely and accurate information on ICT itself is essential for justification and proper direction of the Government efforts, private sector investments, to study the changing pattern of the demand for internet services and for continuous progress monitoring on ICT achievements.

For this computer literacy data can contribute immensely to an understanding of the demand and supply of skills in the global, knowledge based economy. Also statistics on the availability of a computer/laptop in households and usage of internet and email that exist between demographic and geographic groups provides more insight for the scattering of ICT facilities.

To cater the relevant data need the Department of Census and Statistics (DCS) has conducted several surveys on computer literacy in Sri Lanka. The surveys were in 2004, 2006/07 and 2009 and latest is in 2014. This bulletin exposes the major findings of the survey conducted in the year 2014. For the analysis of the computer literacy survey a nationally distributed sample of 25,000 households with 19,073,703 persons aged 5 – 69 years were enumerated. Other than the indicators published in first six month bulletin, some district level information are published in this annual bulletin.

Household computer ownership

If a desktop or laptop is available at a household then that household is considered as a computer owned household. The Table 1 shows the percentage distribution of computer owned households by Sector/ Province levels. In 2014, at least one computer is available in 22% of households of the country. That is one out of every five households owns either a desktop or a laptop computer. This percentage is 37.5% in Urban Sector and Rural and Estate Sector show 20.1% and 4.7% respectively. The highest availability is in Western province (34.1%) while the lowest availability is reported from Uva. Over the survey periods from 2004 till 2014 overall percentage has increased sharply from 3.8% to 15.8%.

Table 1: Percentage of computer owned households by Sector and Province - 2004, 2006/07, 2009 and 2014.

Sector/ Province	Desktop (%)				Desktop or Laptop (%)	
	2004	2006/07	2009	2014	2009	2014
Sri Lanka	3.8	8.2	10.6	15.8	11.4	22.4
Urban	10.5	17.8	23.6	23.7	26.3	37.5
Rural	3.1	6.9	9.2	14.8	9.8	20.1
Estate	0.3	1.1	3.1	3.6	3.3	4.7
Province						
Western	8.4	16.4	19.0	23.3	20.7	34.1
Central	3.3	6.7	9.7	16.7	10.4	22.0
Southern	2.2	4.9	6.6	15.0	7.2	20.2
Northern	N.A.	N.A.	N.A.	11.4	N.A.	20.4
Eastern	1.2	3.7	5.8	9.0	5.9	13.5
North-western	3.1	4.8	6.9	13.5	7.1	19.2
North-central	1.4	2.7	6.1	9.3	6.8	12.7
Uva	0.4	2.7	4.6	7.9	4.9	9.9
Sabaragamuwa	2.0	3.3	7.3	13.6	7.5	17.0

N.A. - not available

Table 2 shows the year of acquisition of the first computer to the household. It was revealed that about 66 percent of the households have acquired the first computer during the last five years (2010 – 2014) and the Rural sector shows a higher recent acquisition (69.7%) than the Urban sector (56.2%).

Table 2: Computer owned households (percentage) by the year of first acquisition of a computer -2014

Sector	Total	Before 2001	2001-2004	2005-2009	2010-2014
Sri Lanka	100.0	6.0	5.7	22.2	66.1
Urban	100.0	9.9	7.7	26.2	56.2
Rural *	100.0	4.5	5.0	20.8	69.7

*Including Estate sector

Map1: Household computer ownership (percentage) -2014

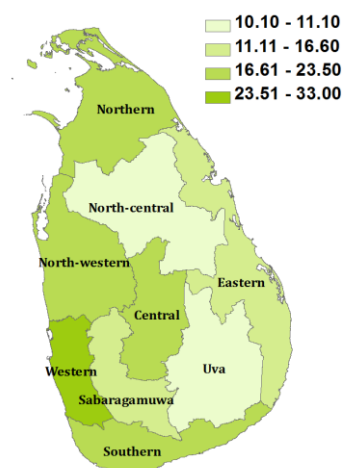


Figure 1: Percentage of Desktop or Laptop computer owned households by Sector: 2009 and 2014

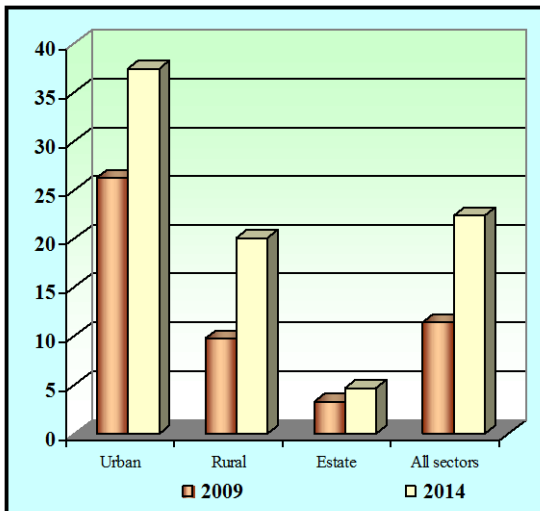
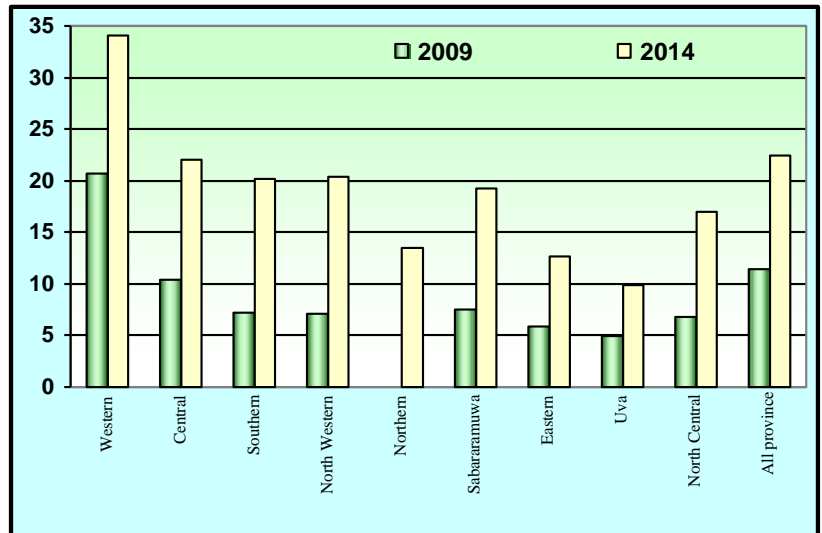


Figure 2: Percentage of Desktop or Laptop computer owned households by province: 2009 and 2014



Computer literacy

Definition for Computer literacy: A person (aged 5-69) is considered as a computer literate person if he/she could use computer on his/her own. For example, even if a 5 years old child can play a computer game then he/she is considered as a computer literate person.

Definition for computer literacy rate: Computer Literate population expressed as a percentage to the total population, (aged 5 – 69 years) within the respective domain.

The Urban sector shows the highest computer literacy rate (36.4%) among residential sectors. Computer literacy rate for Rural and Estate are 23.6% and 7.1% respectively. Among the provinces the highest level of computer literacy is reported from the Western province (35.6%) while the lowest percentage is reported from Eastern province. The annual data by district level show the existing differences among district and further shows the prevailing digital divide (Table 3.1).

Table 3: Computer literacy rate by sector and province

Sector/Province	Computer literacy rate (%)		
	2006/07	2009	2014
Sri Lanka	16.1	20.3	25.1
Sector			
Urban	25.1	31.1	36.4
Rural	15.1	19.3	23.6
Estate	04.3	08.4	7.1
Province			
Western	23.2	27.7	35.6
Central	14.8	18.0	23.5
Southern	15.6	19.8	24.8
Northern	N.A.	N.A.	16.8
Eastern	11.4	12.9	14.4
North Western	12.6	16.5	23.3
North Central	8.9	14.1	16.7
Uva	9.9	14.7	15.8
Sabaragamuwa	12.3	19.1	21.8

N.A. - not available

Table 3.1: Computer literacy rate by district

District	Literacy Rate	District	Literacy Rate
All Island	25.1	Mulativu	10.3
Colombo	41.6	Kilinochchi	13.6
Gampaha	32.6	Batticaloa	13.9
Kalutara	30.0	Ampara	14.8
Kandy	28.9	Trincomalee	14.7
Matale	22.8	Kurunegala	24.0
Nuwara Eliya	13.2	Puttalam	21.8
Galle	24.6	Anuradhapura	15.8
Matara	25.5	Polonnaruwa	18.7
Hambantota	24.3	Badulla	14.1
Jaffna	18.6	Monaragala	18.3
Mannar	10.5	Ratnapura	21.1
Vavunia	19.8	Kegalle	22.6

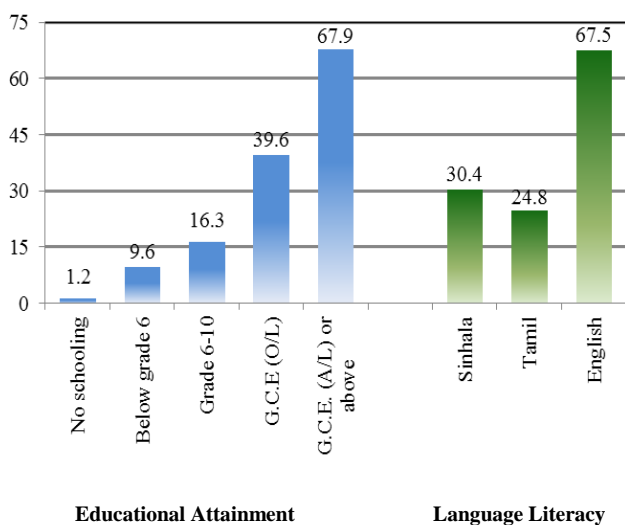
Percentage of Computer Literate population (Computer Literacy) over the survey periods has been gradually increasing. Overall Computer Literacy reported in 2014 for Sri Lanka is 25.1%. The survey results show an increase of 5 percentage points from 2009 to 2014.

Table 4: Computer literacy rate by Gender, Age, Level of education, and Language literacy – 2014

Gender, Age group, Educational attainment and Language literacy	Computer literacy rate (%)
Sri Lanka	25.1
By Sex	
Male	26.9
Female	23.6
By Age group(years)	
5 - 9	12.6
10 - 14	36.3
15 - 19	54.8
20 - 24	50.2
25 - 29	41.1
30 - 34	29.7
35 - 39	23.3
40 - 49	15.6
50 - 59	9.7
60 - 69	5.3
By Educational attainment	
No schooling	1.2
Below grade 6	9.6
Grade 6-10	16.3
G.C.E (O/L)	39.6
G.C.E. (A/L) or above	67.9
By Language literacy	
Sinhala	30.4
Tamil	24.8
English	67.5

As given in Table 4 the Computer literacy among male (26.9%) is higher than that of female (23.6%) in 2014. Young youths (aged 15 – 19 years) show the highest computer literacy rate (54.8%) among all other age groups. Age 50 years and above groups show low computer literacy rates.

Figure 4: Distribution of computer literacy rate by Educational attainment and Language literacy - 2014



The survey results reveal that higher the level of education higher the computer literacy. The group with A/L or above level of education shows the highest computer literacy rate (67.9%). Also computer literacy is higher among those who are literate in English language (67.5%).

Table 5: Computer literacy among computer aware employed population (aged 15 – 69 years) by Occupation – 2014

Occupation group	Computer literacy (%)
Sri Lanka	51.4
Managers, Senior Officials and Legislators	73.4
Professionals	81.4
Technicians and Associate Professionals	80.8
Clerks and Clerical support workers	88.6
Services and Sales workers	46.7
Skilled Agricultural, Forestry and Fishery workers	20.0
Craft and Related Trades workers	36.5
Plant and Machine operators and Assemblers	34.0
Elementary occupations	23.0
Armed Forces Occupations & unidentified occupations	69.2

Computer literacy among the employed population who are aware of computer in Sri Lanka is around 51 % in 2014 and the positions such as Senior officials and Managers (73.4%), Professionals (81.4%), Technical and Associate professionals (80.8%) and Clerks and Clerical support workers (88.6%) have higher computer literacy. However, even among the individuals engage in elementary occupations twenty three percent are computer literate.

Table 6: Computer literacy among unemployed population (aged 15 – 69 years) by age group – 2014

Age group (years)	Total	Computer literate population	
		Literate (%)	Not literate (%)
Sri Lanka	100.0	55.6	44.4
15 - 19	100.0	51.0	49.0
20 - 24	100.0	65.1	34.9
25 - 29	100.0	65.4	34.6
30 - 39	100.0	47.8	52.2
40 - 69	100.0	21.1	78.9

Among the unemployed, aged (20-29) group have high computer literacy. Annual survey results reveal that among unemployed many have at least some ICT skills. Even among the group aged 40-69 every one out of five are computer literate.

Source of computer training

Table 7 shows that the majority of those who are computer literate have received training from Private institutions or School/University. The training received through Government training centres are comparatively low (6.1%), however in the Estate sector this percentage is about 12.4%.

Table 7: Percentage distribution of Computer literate household population (aged 5 – 69 years) by sources of receiving computer knowledge* and sector – 2014

Source of computer training multiple	Total (%)	Residential sector (%)		
		Urban	Rural	Estate
Private training course	31.5	30.5	31.6	43.7
School/University	39.5	39.4	39.5	43.2
Govt. training centres	6.1	5.1	6.3	12.4
Employment activities	14.8	20.2	13.1	7.7
Work place	7.2	10.7	6.1	3.5
Family members	24.4	30.0	22.7	18.2
Friends/ Relatives	18.7	20.7	18.0	20.8
Self	22.1	29.5	19.9	10.0
Other	3.6	4.3	3.4	4.0

* Multiple choice answers

Internet and E-mail use

The Table 8 depicts that 10.5 % of the population aged 5 to 69 years uses the internet facility at least once during last twelve months. Urban sector, where the facilities are largely available, shows highest usage of both e-mail and internet among the other sectors.

Table 8: Percentage distribution of Internet and E-mail using household population (aged 5 – 69 years) by District – 2014

District	Household Population (age 5-69)	
	Internet (%)	E-mail (%)
Sri Lanka	10.5	8.3
Colombo	24.1	20.6
Gampaha	16.8	13.4
Kalutara	12.0	9.5
Kandy	10.1	8.0
Matale	4.6	3.8
Nuwara Eliya	5.2	4.1
Galle	8.0	6.3
Matara	8.2	5.9
Hambantota	5.8	3.8
Jaffna	13.8	9.1
Mannar	7.6	6.2
Vavunia	16.4	5.2
Mulativu	3.3	2.5
Kilinochchi	8.2	5.3
Batticaloa	7.2	5.3
Ampara	6.3	4.9
Trincomalee	6.5	5.1
Kurunegala	8.2	6.1
Puttalam	9.3	6.7
Anuradhapura	5.4	3.6
Polonnaruwa	5.4	4.3
Badulla	3.5	3.3
Monaragala	3.9	2.9
Ratnapura	4.8	3.8
Kegalle	5.7	4.7

Different usage patterns of internet usage can be observed among districts (Table 8). Colombo district shows the highest percentage (24.1%) of population using internet while Mulativu district shows the lowest percentage (3.3%).

The survey results reveals that 8.3 percent of the household population aged 5 – 69 years has used E-mail facility at least once during the last 12 months period. Highest e-mail usage is reported from the Colombo district (20.6%) followed by Gampaha district (13.4%). The lowest e-mail usage among the districts has reported from the Mulativu district (2.5%).

Table 9: Percentage distribution of Internet and E-mail using household population (aged 5 – 69 years) by age group – 2014

Age group (years)	Household Population (age5-69)	
	Internet (%)	E-mail (%)
Sri Lanka	10.5	8.3
5 - 14	3.7	1.9
15 - 19	18.0	12.4
20 - 24	26.0	21.0
25 - 29	21.2	18.1
30 - 34	15.5	13.0
35 - 39	12.3	10.6
40 - 49	8.5	7.2
50 - 59	5.7	4.5
60 - 69	2.9	2.2

The Table 9 and Figure 5 show the high popularity of e-mail and internet among youth who are in the age group of 15 – 29 years. Among youths in 20 - 24 years age group, one out of every four persons has used the internet facility at least once during the last 12 months and the same group shows the highest usage of e-mail.

Figure 5: Percentage distribution of Internet and E-mail using household population (aged 5 – 69 years) by age group – 2014

